

Collective Worship Policy

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What is collective worship?

The law has never provided a precise definition of collective worship but above all else it must be an educational experience. We know that it is not the same as faith community worship (corporate worship) because:

- A community school is not a faith community
- A community school contains pupils and staff from many different faith backgrounds as well as those who have no religious beliefs or no faith background
- A school community contains a wide range of people with different views on what 'worship' might mean and what or whom may be worthy of worship.

Collective worship is not the same as an Assembly however, it may be part of an assembly. Collective Worship is defined in a way that draws on literature, music, art, drama and other sources of inspiration and reflection for pupils and staff whose religious and cultural backgrounds are of any faith or none. In this way collective worship is inclusive not exclusive.

Why must we have collective worship in school?

It has been a legal requirement to provide collective worship in schools since 1944. The 1988 Education Reform Act (ERA) affirmed its statutory position, with some of the earlier prescription to do with grouping and timing relaxed, allowing what had become widespread practice in schools. The 1996 Education Act further confirmed the requirements, since when there has been no change to this primary legislation, by which duty schools remain bound.

The basic requirement is that all registered pupils shall take part in an act of collective worship every day. (ERA 6.1) There are only two exceptions to this:

- Parents have the right to withdraw their child from collective worship
- Pupils in school sixth forms are permitted to decide for themselves whether to attend or not.

Schools have a legal duty to:

- Promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society
- Prepare such pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life

Collective Worship can make an important contribution towards discharging this duty. It is the responsibility of governors and the head teacher to ensure that Collective Worship is implemented in schools.

For further information on this please see the Lewisham SACRE (Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education) [information](#).

What is the law around collective worship?

The delivery of collective worship is guided by the law and government guidance which states that:

- Collective worship must be provided daily (separate arrangements may be made for nurseries and special schools)
- Collective worship may take place at any time of the school day
- Schools may decide on the age/grouping of pupils and these may vary from day to day
- The time decided for the delivery of collective worship may vary for different groups from day to day
- Generally collective worship should take place on school premises (clearly this is not possible when pupils are away on school journeys for example when the venue for the collective worship will be changed)
- The content of the majority of acts of collective worship in a term should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, reflecting the broad traditions of the Christian belief."

- The content should have regard for the family backgrounds, ages and aptitudes of pupils
- Parents may withdraw their children from collective worship
- Teachers may withdraw from collective worship
- In a community school the responsibility for managing the provision for collective worship is with the headteacher after consultation with the governing body
- Every maintained school is required to provide information about the collective worship provided by the school and how parents may withdraw their children from it

What are the aims of collective worship?

The aims of collective worship are to:

- Contribute significantly to the ethos of Kilmore Primary School and support our aim to ensure children are *independent, innovative and curious learners* as well as help us to *develop the children's emotional intelligence and their empathy for others*
- Develop a community spirit and allow opportunities for the whole school and school groups to contemplate and reflect together
- Share common aims and values
- Celebrate achievement and special times
- Explore together the world in which we live and understand how we can contribute to it
- Allow children to explore their own beliefs and reflect on the direction of their lives

The law states that *the content of the majority of acts of collective worship in a term should be "wholly or mainly of a broadly Christian character, reflecting the broad traditions of the Christian belief."*

This means that Collective Worship is not expected to be conventionally Christian and allows freedom of practice. As it *broadly reflects the traditions of Christian beliefs*, it means it does not have to be exclusively or specifically Christian.

At times, collective worship may include aspects of the curriculum, which will enhance the experiences of the children and support their learning. The provision of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is in line with school policy which informs our practice. To ensure Collective Worship provides opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development it will address a wide variety of themes and topics, use diverse stimuli and resources and provide pupils with the opportunity to 'respond' on their own level.

What does collective worship look like at Kilmore?

Collective worship may include and is not limited to the following:

- Marking celebrations of festivals or important religious days in all religious calendars

Christianity	Islam	Hinduism	Sikhism	Buddhism	Judaism	Other
Christmas Easter Harvest	Ramadan Eid al Fitr	Holi Diwali	Birth of Guru Nanak	Vesak (Buddha day)	Hanukah Purim	Chinese New Year

- Share stories from around the world
- Discussions from religious or cultural leaders
- Class mindfulness or reflection opportunities
- Singing assemblies where music from around the world is celebrated and sung
- Circle time – where ideas are shared and reflected upon
- Within the context of learning about a religion

Across the week collective worship will take the form of:

- Assemblies: Celebration, Whole school themed, In-Class assemblies, External class Festivals and Singing

Recording and monitoring

A record of all assemblies is kept on the strategic school calendar with a brief account of each. Assembly resources are kept on the server.

Do I have the right to withdraw my child from collective worship?

Collective worship sessions will be conducted in a manner that is sensitive to the beliefs of all of our children and families. We will endeavour to ensure no child is made to feel uncomfortable.

You do have the right to withdraw your child from collective worship. Children cannot be withdrawn from areas where they may be exposed to collective worship in the form of singing, however, they can be withdrawn from participating in the singing. Should you wish to withdraw your child, please speak to the headteacher regarding any questions you may have and the practicalities of the withdrawal.



KILMORIE
PRIMARY SCHOOL